

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 5878

EXDIS

GENEVA FOR DEP ASST SEC SAUNDERS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, IEG, IS

SUAR: TRANSFER OF AUB RODEIS OIL FIELDS

REF: TEL AVIV 5794

1. SVI DINSTEIN, ENERGY ADVISER TO GOI, TOLD ECON COUNSELOR SEPT 12 THAT TEAM OF ENI EXECUTIVES HAD VISITED ISRAEL FEW DAYS BEFORE TO DISCUSS TRANSFER OF ABU RODEIS. ITALIANS SAID THAT EGYPTIAN ENERGY CHIEF HAD VISITED ITALY PREVIOUS WEEK AND HAD ASKED ENI TO ARRANGE FOR TRANSFER ON EGYPT'S BEHALF. DINSTEIN TOLD ENI GROUP THAT WHILE GOI WOULD BE PREPARED TO EFFECT TRANSFER THROUGH ENI IT WOULD REQUIRE WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION ESTABLISHING BEYOND QUESTION THAT ENI WAS EMPOWERED TO ACT ON BEHALF OF EGYPTIANS. DINSTEIN SAID THAT HE HAD INFORMED ISRAELI DELEGATION IN GENEVA OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH ENI.

2. RE CURRENT SITUATION AT ABU RODEIS, DINSTEIN SAID ISRAELIS ARE IN PROCESS OF REDUCING WORK FORCE TO MINIMUM NUMBER, I.E., ABOUT 100, REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN CURRENT PRODUCTION. GOI WILL MAINTAIN CURRENT CRUDE
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FLOW AND THUS TRANSFER FULLY OPERATING WELLS TO EGYPTIANS

OR THEIR AGENTS. WHEN ENI REPS EXPRESSED DOUBT TO DINSTEIN THAT THEY OR EGYPTIANS WOULD HAVE ENOUGH AVAILABLE QUALIFIED WORKERS TO OPERATE OIL FIELDS, HE REPLIED THAT EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO AVOID ANY INTERRUPTION IN OIL FLOW SINCE THAT COULD CAUSE LOSS OF PRESSURE AND THUS CAUSE DAMAGE TO FIELDS.

3. DINSTEIN CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF TWO FOREIGN OIL COMPANIES RECENTLY VISITED ISRAEL WITH OFFERS TO SELL CRUDE. BOTH SOURCES INDICATED THAT CRUDE WAS IN PLENTIFUL SUPPLY ALTHOUGH PRICES COULD NOT BE QUOTED UNTIL AFTER OPEC MEETING LATER THIS MONTH. HE SEID THAT ONE FIRM, A US COMPANY, OFFERED IRANIAN CRUDE; WHILE THE OTHER, A EUROPEAN COMPANY, OFFERED OIL FROM GABON AND OTHER R4-:ARAB SOURCES.

4. WITH REGARD TO MEXICO AS SOURCE OF SUPPLY, DINSTEIN SAID THAT MEXICANS WERE WILLING TO INCREASE SALES ABOVE PRESENT 40,000 TONS PER MONTH. FREIGHT COSTS FROM MEXICO WERE A PROBLEM, HOWEVER, PRIMARILY BECAUSE MEXICAN OIL PORTS ARE NOT DEEP ENOUGH TO ACCOMODATE SUPER TANKERS. AT PRESENT, ISCUELIS ARE USING ONE SMALL TANKER WHICH EACH MONTH TRANSPORTS MEXICAN CRUDE TO ISRAEL AND RETURNS WITH IRANIAN CRUDE FOR US MARKET FROM EILAT/ASHKELON PIPELINE.

5. NOTE: FOLLOWINGCOMMUNIQUE WAS RELEASED BY IDF ON SEPT 11: QUOTE THE AREA OF RAS SUDAR AND ABU RODEIS HAS BEEN DECLARED A CLOSED MILITARY ZONE. CIVILIANS WILL NOT BE ADMITTED TO THE AREA EXCEPT BY PERMISSION OF THE ZONE'S MILITARY COMMANDER.MFNQUOTE. TOON

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